REMARKS/ARGUMENT

The title has been amended to make it more descriptive as requested by the Examiner.

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating the substance of claim 3 therein. Since claim 3 was directly dependent on claim 1, this amendment essentially is a rewrite of claim 3 in independent form and accordingly does not represent any narrowing of the subject matter in amended claim 1.

Claim 10 has been amended to conform to the amendment made to claim 1.

Reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norris (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,768) in view of Tagami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,402,171). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to an image reproduction apparatus comprising display-image discrimination means for discriminating a display mode in which selected image data is to be displayed, the display mode including at least a normal display mode, an at-a-glance display mode and a panoramic display mode. The display-image discrimination means includes means for discriminating that the image data is a panoramic image when the aspect ratio of the image data differs from that of a display area of a display device. Display-mode setting means are provided for setting the display mode, which is discriminated by the display-image discrimination means, to the image data; and display means are provided for displaying the image data in the display mode set by the display-mode setting means.

No such image reproduction apparatus is disposed, or suggested in either Norris or Tagami or the combination thereof.

Norris is directed to a method and apparatus for assembling a photographic album from a database of photographs. The method includes selecting a page for the photographs, and selecting an album and mat to accommodate the selected photographs. Means are provided for sequentially viewing each page of the photographic album.

The Examiner characterizes this means for sequential viewing, which is essentially a slide show, as a panoramic display mode. However, it is clear that it is not a panoramic image display

mode. As well understood, a panoramic image is a single image. Norris, however, does not establish a panoramic display mode for a single image. What Norris does is sequentially view different images rather than viewing different parts of a single image. Thus, the slide show function of Norris is not the discriminating of a panoramic display mode.

That this is the case is made clear by Norris' discussion at col. 8, lines 43 and 45, in which, according to Norris, panoramic images are displayed not by sequentially viewing parts of a single image but by putting views which together constitute a panoramic image onto facing pages of the album.

Thus, Norris fails to suggest a panoramic display mode for a single image, let alone a panoramic display mode which is initiated when display-image discrimination means discriminates that image data is a panoramic image when the aspect ratio of the image data differs from that of the display area of the display device.

The Examiner first contends in lines 1 and 2 of page 3 of the Office Action that Norris does have a panoramic display mode, but then on lines 7 and 8 of page 3 recognizes that Norris, does not disclose a panoramic display mode and therefore, cites Tagami et al. as disclosing such a mode. The Examiner then contends that it would be obvious to incorporate the teachings of Tagami et al. et al. into Norris in order to establish a panoramic display mode. Applicant disagrees.

First, Norris already discloses a way of displaying panoramic images. Thus, as set forth in col. 8, lines 43-45, Norris indicates that a panoramic display function can be included in the system to display panoramic images by providing panoramic views on facing pages of the album. Accordingly, there would be no motivation for one skilled in the art to modify Norris to display panoramic images by incorporating the teaching of Tagami et al. therein since Norris already suggests how panoramic images may be displayed in the Norris system.

Secondly, even, assuming for the sake of argument, that Norris and Tagami et al. were combined, such combination would still not render applicant's invention, as defined in claim 1, obvious. More specifically, such a combination would not disclose or suggest:

means for discriminating that the image data is a panoramic image when the aspect ratio of the image data differs from that of a display device

This is the limitation from claim 3 that has been incorporated into independent claim 1. In connection with this limitation, the Examiner at page 4 of the Office Action contends that Norris discloses such limitation. In this connection, the Examiner refers to the Abstract line 16-19 of Norris, col 2, line 10-11 of Norris, and col. 7, line 19-48 of Norris. However, the Abstract lines 16-19 and col. 7, lines 19-48 only refer to the slide show aspects of Norris and not to a panoramic display mode. Similarly, col. 2, lines 10-11 only refers to viewing the photographic images which are proportionately sized for selected locations but does not either disclose or suggest that if the aspect ratio differs from that of the display area, the system enters a panoramic display mode. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a panoramic display mode entered into in Norris other than that a panoramic image may be displayed by putting images constituting the panoramic image on facing pages of the album.

The Examiner also refers to Figs. 50 and 52 in Tagami et al. It is not clear why the Examiner relies on these figures, however, it is clear that Tagami does not rely on an aspect ratio for triggering a panoramic display mode but, instead, as shown in Fig. 61 and discussed in col. 27, lines 3-16 relies on a "P" at the upper right of a reproduced image to indicate that the image is a panoramic image and selects signal processing based upon this indication.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is clearly patentable over the combination of Norris and Tagami.

Claims 2 and 4-11 are dependent either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore patentable for the same reasons, as well as for a combination of features set forth in these claims and in the combination of features set forth in claims on which they depend.

More specifically, applicants claims 4-7 are directed to the scrolling aspect of applicant's invention. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, there is no scroll operation for a panoramic image either disclosed or suggested in Norris. Instead, Norris merely discloses a slide show function for sequential viewing of a plurality of images.

With respect to Tagami, as noted above, there is no suggestion to combine the teachings of Tagami with Norris and even if, for the sake of argument, this were done, there is no teaching or suggestion that a panoramic mode should be entered into depending upon the aspect ratio of the image to be displayed. Instead, in Tagami, the letter "P" is used to directly identify an image which is a panoramic image.

Nor does either Norris or Tagami or the combination teach, as set forth in claim 7, a means for switching between a reduced-image display mode in which the panoramic image is reduced and a scroll displaying mode.

With respect to claim 8, contrary to the Examiner's intention, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Norris displaying whether an image displayed in the display area is part of or whole of the image data. In all cases in Norris, the images being displayed are complete images.

Nor is there any disclosure or suggestion in Tagami of modifying Norris such as to show partial images.

Claim 10 is directed to a divided-image stepping display mode in which a panoramic images is divided into a plurality of areas and the areas are advanced frame by frame and displayed step by step when the aspect ration of the panoramic image is plural larger than that of a display area as discussed above. Neither Norris or Tagami uses the aspect or ratio of an image as a basis for panoramic viewing.

Claim 11 provides, *inter alia*, a single/overall image display mode switching means for, when a panoramic images is displayed in a display area, switching between a single-image display mode and an overall-imaged display where the single image display includes a representative-image display and a reduced-image display, and the overall-image display mode performs an overall-image display including a divided-image stepping display and a scroll display.

In view of the foregoing, this application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Asst. Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on January 9, 2003

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Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX B

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE
37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b)(iii) AND (c)(ii)

TITLE:

IMAGE REPRODUCTION APPARATUS WITH PANORAMIC MODE BASED ON ASPECT RATIO

CLAIMS:

1. (Twice Amended) An image reproduction apparatus comprising:

display-image discrimination means for discriminating a display mode in which selected image data is to be displayed, the display mode including at least a normal display mode, an at-a-glance display mode and a panoramic display mode, wherein the display-image discrimination means includes means for discriminating that the image data is a panoramic image when the aspect ratio of the image data differs from that of a display area of a display device ;

display-mode setting means for setting the display mode, which is discriminated by the display-image discrimination means, to the image data; and

display means for displaying the image data in the display mode set by the display-mode setting means.

10. (Amended) An image reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the display means has a divided-image stepping display mode in which a panoramic image is divided into a plurality of areas and the areas are advanced frame by frame and displayed step by step when [an] the aspect ratio of the panoramic image is plural times larger than that of a display area.